



No. 194. TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB BULLETIN

Page

May 1975

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Librarian - Mrs. M.I. McDonald and then Miss A. Cooper.

Delegates, Federation of Tasmanian Field Naturalists' Clubs - Mrs. Thorpe, Mr. Hewer.

NEXT MEETING will be held in the Royal Society Room, Tasmanian Museum on Thursday 15th May, at 7.45 p.m.

The speaker will be Mr. D.R. Gregg, Director of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, on the subject of *ORIGIN OF TASMANIA*

NEXT OUTING - Still to be arranged

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Library - New books - not to be stored, but well worth reading - see our librarian Miss Ann Cooper.

'Forest we care for' donated by Mrs. Thorpe

'Australian Continent in danger' and

'Great Barrier Reef' donated by Miss Barbara Greenstreet.

'Bird Life' by Rumley received for commentary.

Publications too good to miss 'Habitat' published by Australian Conservation Foundation, only \$3. for six issues per year. or become a member for \$8. per year. See the Secretary.

'The World of Olegas Truchanas' - It is on the market. Each photo is a gem. The memories of Lake Pedder, the grandeur of the Arthur Range. The living forest of Mount Ann or the Silence after the storm. Olegas certainly did have the unique quality of Tasmania's inexpressible beauty with his artistic insight of photography. If you can spare the \$19.50 you will gain and help.

RARE ORCHID FIND NEAR PERTH, W.A.

Any of one of the world's strangest orchids, *Spiculacaea ciliata*, was discovered this summer at Boulder Rock, about 50 Km. south of Perth by members of the I.A. Native Orchid Society, whose members are listing as many orchids as possible, many of which are believed to be in danger of extinction.

This orchid is sometimes known as the Elbow Orchid because of its jointed leaves. It produces a green and brown flower when the foliage withered and the plant has apparently died. Specimens found at Bear Rock bloomed profusely and lasted well after they were collected.

September 1973, Dr. Peter Leverstee, of the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science, Adelaide, accidentally discovered Australia's newest animal (mammal) in a park about 20 Km. east of Adelaide. The tiny rod is about the same size as the ordinary house mouse, weighs about

First only two males were discovered, but further searching has found a male, with a litter of five, which she carries in a backward facing pouch. The new 'mice' are being encouraged to breed in captivity, so that any other females found will also produce litters and provide ample material for study.

Like the house mouse, this animal has a pointed snout and many short, sharp teeth. It is said to belong to the same family of meat eaters as the native cat and the Tasmanian Devil. Apparently the new mammal is not without a name.

Tasmania has seen a few fossil discoveries, like the *Zygomaturis* from Lowbray Swamp area (N.W. Tas.) size of a small bullock; fossils remains Old Beach Road, near Hobart; smaller fossils from Fossil Bluff on the North West, and in the North East. We can only mention to date fossil remains of large bird like creatures found near the foot of Mount Cameron in 1962. These dated "from mid to late Tertiary and Pleistocene in age". (see article in the Emu, Vol 74, part 4, October, 1974, by Rich & Green) Other types no doubt have been found from time to time, and no doubt more fossils will be discovered in the future. .. But what a thrill it will be to dig up something unexpected like fossil bones of a creature that lived so long ago— when the world was young.

BRICKS FROM SAWDUST

Sawdust, once despised, is now one of the most valuable of all waste products. From it we make artificial woods, spirit, dyes, oxalic acid, and a good many forms of blasting powder.

By mixing the dust of fine, hard woods with ivory paste, water glass and glue, a hard mass is formed from which veneers are cut. These do not warp or crack, and will take polish equal to that of old marble.

For furniture, for moulded decorations, and for flooring, various mixtures of sawdust with other materials are employed. One is a cellulose which has a real metallic lustre. These can be coloured as desired.

No fewer than 22 sorts of blasting powder are made with sawdust as a base. 'Heraklin', largely used in French coal mines, is made of sawdust saturated with picric acid and saltpetre, and mixed with sulphur and saltpetre. It burns somewhat slowly, so that the coal is merely ripped, and not blown to fragments.

Briquettes for burning are made of coarse sawdust by the addition of tar or pitch, and also bricks for building purposes. Fine sawdust is boiled with water glass, and powdered asbestos and glue mixed in. Bricks so made are damp-proof and fire-proof, besides being very light and easy to handle.

One of the newest and most promising uses of sawdust is to relieve the present paper famine. Not only sawdust, but shavings and wood chips are used. They are boiled down into cellulose, but the process is too intricate to be fully described.

Report from Federation of Field Naturalists Meeting, Launceston 5th Apr

Delegates - Mr. & Mrs. J. Rhoades and B. Dudgeon.

New president - Mr. C. Taylor, Secretary Mr. G. Britton (N.E. Field Nats)

Vice presidents - Mrs. Cameron and Miss Stocks.

Brief Business

Protection plants on Crown Lands: Clubs to prepare check lists of plants at specific areas. Also clubs to prepare lists of plants in reserves in their areas, and circulate to other clubs.

Trail Bikes: Make use of all forms of publicity to emphasise damage caused by trail bikes especially on formed tracks in parks and reserves. We would like to see areas set aside for trail bike recreation.

Rehabilitation clauses in Mining Act. Local groups to keep eye on mining areas, suggestion re inclusion of mining locality maps on application acknowledged by Minister to have merit and to be considered in future Mining Act amendments.

Grazing at Arthur River area - botanical survey just completed/nil report

Proposal to enlarge Cradle Mountain Lake St. Clair National Park (page 4

to include area of Walls of Jerusalem and proposal for Central Plateau
is under review.
Timing of poison on areas of re-afforestation discussed - the effect on native
fauna.

Protection of flora on Crown Lands - Act under review.

North East F.N. Club to continue action to have Mount Cameron National Park.
Bird Observers Association of Tasmania proposed motion that the Federation
concentrate its efforts on co-operative field work, rather than
conservation matters.

Annually resolved that all clubs should concentrate on co-operative Field
work to the advancement of conservation. Clubs should conduct more
detailed surveys of various areas similar to our club work in the Dial Range
one-seed - Federation to write to Government to have it declared a noxious
weed.

Local groups to conduct "pulling out" projects in infected areas.

Things to watch for - CATTLE EGRETS ARDEOLA ibis (LINNAEUS) 1758

Returning from the Easter Camp we noticed seven cattle egrets feeding with
cattle on the flats at Forth. In our newsletter last May we quoted a
report from "Nats News" that 30 cattle egrets had been observed in the
diary district (April, 1974) Keep your eyes open - look for a large
white bird (about the size of a heron) with a hunched-dejected appearance
accompanying grazing animals, and let us have your report.

For those who would like to see more birds in our own gardens, an excellent
small book is available. It is called "Australian Native Gardens and
Birds" by Barbara Salter. It is in the series Jacaranda Pocket Guides
and costs about \$2. It gives lists of suitable plants, recipes for birds
and bridge etc.

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M for those who have not yet paid their 1975 sub.

Enclosed herewith is my 1975 sub.

Signed: Mr.Mrs.Miss _____

Address .. _____

Postcode _____ PHONE: Bus. _____ Private _____

Adult members ... \$4.50. Group membership (family etc.) \$6.00

Junior, student, pensioner... \$2.50

Non-member sub to 'The Tasmanian Naturalist'... \$2.00

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